

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. *(Currently Amended)* An e-commerce brokering method for mediating commerce between a plurality of suppliers and a buyer via a digital data communication network, comprising the steps of:

storing public data and non-public data in a database of an agent, said public data containing standardized attribute information about a product supplied by the plurality of suppliers, said public data able to be viewed so as to compare the attribute information of each supplier's product, said non-public data comprising sets of transaction rules set for each combination of a supplier and the buyer, wherein at least one set of said transaction rules is established by a respective combination of supplier and buyer prior to the buyer's selection of a product supplied by the plurality of suppliers;

applying to the agent for a transaction of a selected product, wherein the buyer selects a product from said database via said data communication network;

if the buyer has applied for a transaction, said agent reads the transaction rules set applicable to the combination of buyer and supplier of the selected product from said non-public data, prepares cost estimates and presents the cost estimates to the buyer; and